

PROGRAM NOTES OF GRADUATE RECITAL

By

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Abstract

This paper discusses the four pieces of the graduate recital of student Evanthia Maniatopoulou; Johann Sebastian Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in F minor, Well-Tempered Clavier Book II, BWV 881*; Ludwig van Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 30, Op. 109*; Frédéric Chopin's *Scherzo No. 3, Op. 39*; and Sergei Prokofiev's *Piano Sonata No. 7, Op. 83*.

It is divided into four chapters, with one chapter dedicated to each piece. In each chapter there is a discussion about the composer's background, then some comments about his compositional style in general, then some information about the genre in which every piece falls into, and finally a brief analysis and discussion about the specific piece that was in the graduate recital.

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Chapter 1 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Background

Johann Sebastian Bach is arguably the most important composer of the Baroque Era. The year of his death (1750) is traditionally used as a landmark to signify the end of that era. He was born on March 21, 1685 in Eisenach to an extremely musical family that counts over 70 professional musicians. The younger child of Johann Ambrosius Bach (1645–95) and his first wife Maria Elisabeth, née Lämmerhirt (1644–94), he was looked after by his older brother Johann Christoph Bach (1671–1721) after 1695 when both their parents died. Johann Christoph, an organist at Ohrdruf, was probably his first keyboard teacher and while in Ohrdruf Johan Sebastian studied composition by copying out works of other composers.

Throughout his professional career as a musician he held the titles of organist and choirmaster at the church of St. Boniface in Arnstadt (1703-1708), organist and court musician at first and then Konzertmeister to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar (1708-1717), Kapellmeister to the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen (1717-1723) and finally Kantor of St Thomas in Leipzig for the remaining of his life (1723-1750).

His compositions, more than 1000 in total, consist of a variety of different genres of choral, instrumental, sacred and secular music. Although Bach is more widely known as a composer of sacred music, he would most likely compose according to the needs of his job, or the likings of his employer. For instance, in Cöthen he composed a lot of instrumental music because the environment favored it, such as the first book of The Well-Tempered Clavier, various violin and cello sonatas, suites, and partitas, and the six Brandenburg Concertos, but as a Kantor in Leipzig

his compositional focus leaned towards sacred music. Only in the first five years since he moved there Bach had completed three annual cycles of *Cantatas*, something that translates to more than 150 works, along with two Passions, *St John* (1724) and *St Matthew* (1727), his *Magnificat* (c1732-5), and his varying duties as the musical director of Thomasschule, the boarding school attached to St. Thomas church.

Bach was a religious and righteous man, but by no means does that make him secluded from the joys of secular life. He married twice, in 1707 to Maria Barbara Bach (1684 - 1720), and then, after the death of his first wife, to Anna Magdalena Wilcken (1701-1760) in 1721, and fathered 20 children, ten of which survived into adulthood. Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that his music is sterile and stern and an interpretation that lacks emotion does not seem appropriate to his style.

Compositional Style

Bach is regarded by many as the master of counterpoint throughout music history. The great importance that Bach gave to counterpoint made him appear as a conservative composer to his contemporaries who believed his compositions to be complicated and obscure. But as Schulenberg points out, “Bach’s counterpoint is fundamentally different from that of his predecessors” therefore it is not that he was composing on a style of the past, but he was following his musical path.¹ Despite his strong affinity to polyphonic writing, he would also employ homophonic textures. That would usually be the case when he wanted to write

¹ David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J.S. Bach*, 2nd ed. (New York London: Routledge, 2013), 33.

recitative-like virtuosic runs of fast notes, as in the first part of *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* BWV 903, or in the Gigue of his Partita No. 1 BWV 825 (example 1).



Ex. 1 *Partita No. 1, Gigue*, mm. 17-19, (Leipzig: C.F. Peters)

Konrad Wolff in his book *Masters of The Keyboard* states that Bach compositionally treats different genres differently, yet he observes some common elements between them.² One of them is that he did his best to avoid the augmented second between the 6th and 7th degree note in the minor mode. He achieved that either by also sharpening the 6th degree (see example 2) or by creating melodic turns or octave displacements to maneuver around an otherwise expected augmented second.



Ex. 2 *Chromatic Fantasie and Fugue*, m.1. Sharpening of the 6th degree while ascending and flattening both 6th and 7th while descending (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, ca. 1920)

² Konrad Wolff, "Bach," in *Masters of the keyboard: individual style elements in the piano music of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1983), 8-20.

Some common characteristic among his compositions is the order in which he modulates between tonalities. This order, of course with exceptions, starts with establishing the *tonic* key (global tonic) followed by a modulation to the key of the *dominant*, major dominant if the tonic is major and minor dominant if minor, then to the *relative* key, major or minor depending on the global tonic, then to the key of the *subdominant* and finally returning to the *tonic* key. Lastly, another observation made by Wolff is that usually there is a mathematical relationship between the different sections of Bach's compositions. For instance binary compositions usually have parts of equal length or the second part is longer by a simple mathematical ratio between the two, like 1:2 or 2:3. Of course all these remarks should never be mistaken as general rules that apply to the entirety of Bach's work, since he very frequently tended to break his own rules and create artistic exceptions according to the situation.

Another characteristic of Bach's music is the demanding technical standards of both his instrumental and vocal music. As Christoph Wolff points out, Bach combined "solid compositional craftsmanship with instrumental and vocal virtuosity". That can be expected of his keyboard pieces, since he was renowned virtuoso organist with great improvisation skills.³

The Well-Tempered Clavier

Perhaps one of Bach's more famous compositions is The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I and II (WTC I and WTC II). Each Book consists of 24 preludes and fugues, one in each key (major and

³ Christoph Wolff, et al. "Bach." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed March 19, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40023pg10>.

minor) of the chromatic scale. Robert Schumann called it the “work of work”.⁴

The first copy of Book I that we have dates on 1722, while Book II seems to have been composed between the years 1739 to 1742. The title page of Book I copy reads as follow:

The Well-tempered Clavier, or Preludes and Fugues through all the tones and semitones, both with the major 3rd, or Ut Re Mi and with the minor 3rd, or Re Mi Fa. For the use and improvement of musical youth eager to learn, and for the particular delight of those already skilled in the discipline composed and presented by Johann Sebastian Bach, while capellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen, and director of his chamber music. In the year 1722⁵

That title is quite significant because it gives important information about Book I, that we can assume also applies to Book II, even though there is no equivalent title page for that.

Temperament

First of all the “well-tempered” part of the title refers to a specific kind of tuning that made it possible to play in all different keys.

The ancient Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras (born c. 570 – died c. 500-490 BCE) was the first to observe the numerical relationship between a musical interval and the length of the string that produced it. Those numerical relationships correspond to simple ratios between string’s lengths. To create an octave the ratio must be 2:1, for a fifth is 3:2, for a fourth

⁴ Hermann Keller, foreword to *The Well-tempered Clavier by Johann Sebastian Bach*, by Hermann Keller, trans. Leigh Gerdine (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), 6.

⁵ David Ledbetter, *Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier: the 48 preludes and fugues* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 2.

4:3, for a major third 5:4, for minor third 6:5 to name a few. Those intervals are called “just” or “pure” and a tuning based on those principals *just intonation*. But there is a problem with this kind of tuning. If we tune three pure major 3rds, c-e-g#-c’, we would need the ratios (5:4 x 5:4 x 5:4 = 125:64) which is different from a pure octave (2:1 or 128:64) and so the interval c-c’ is perceived as out of tune.⁶ We would stumble upon the same problem if we tried to tune 12 perfect fifths, $(3/2)^{12}$ or 531441:4096, and then compare it to the same note but tuned as seven perfect octaves, $(2/1)^7$ or 128:1 or 524288:4096. A solution to this problem was presented with the application of *temperament*, in which certain concords are made slightly impure, in a way that it is not clearly audible, so that we avoid the other much more obvious differences, like the ones explained earlier.

At the beginning of 18th century, around the time when the first Book of The WTC was composed, there was much experimentation on tuning instruments and many different types of tuning where in practice: mean-tone temperament, irregular temperament, and equal temperament, that finally became the norm.⁷

In *mean-tone temperament*, in use since 1570, a pure major 3rd (frequency ratio 5:4) is divided in half (mean) to two equal whole tones. In this tuning the 4ths are a little larger than pure and the 5ths a little smaller.⁸ This tuning had the advantage of producing delightfully pure 3rds, in a time when harmony favored them, but it also included a 12-note scale with one fifth so out of tune that sounded like a wolf howling, thus gaining the nickname “the wolf 5th”. Usually tuners

⁶ To find the ratio for bigger intervals one needs to multiply the ratios of the intervals that can create it.

⁷ Ledbetter, *Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier*, 41

⁸ A quarter of a comma smaller to be precise, which explains why this tuning is also called the “ $\frac{1}{4}$ -comma mean-tone”

minded to place the wolf 5th in notes of keys less frequently used, for instance between C \sharp and A \flat , or G \sharp –E \flat , or D \sharp –B \flat .⁹

The most widely used *irregular temperament* during Bach's time, and around the area he was living, was a system invented by Andreas Werckmeister (1645-1706) that is known as Werckmeister III.¹⁰ In that system he tempered some 5ths by a quarter of a comma and some he left pure. The 3rds were also irregularly tempered, with some pure and some larger. Using this system, it is possible to play in all keys of the chromatic scale, although it seems to work better in some keys than in others.¹¹

Lastly, in *equal temperament* the only interval that is pure is the octave and every octave is divided into twelve equal semitones. That creates 5ths smaller than pure, all equally tempered, but going through a cycle of twelve 5ths one is able to return to the exact same note. Although equal temperament was in use already from the 16th century for fretted string instruments, it slowly became the standard way of tuning keyboard instruments after late 18th century.

It is not clear exactly what kind of tuning Bach had in mind when he composed the WTC, especially Book I, but as Ledbetter points out "starting with some version of Werckmeister III, [Bach] seems to have moved towards something more evenly circulating by 1722".¹²

⁹ Mark Lindley, "Mean-tone," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed March 22, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18222>.

¹⁰ Well known for his innovations in the tuning of keyboard instruments, though he has been incorrectly credited with the introduction of equal temperament, which he never described accurately.

¹¹ George J. Buelow. "Werckmeister, Andreas." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed March 22, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/30123>.

¹² Ledbetter, *Bach's Well-tempered clavier: the 48 preludes and fugues*, 49.

Clavier

Bach didn't specify which instrument should be used for his WTC, but chose to use the ambiguous term *Clavier*. At that time the word *Clavier* was used to signify any keyboard instrument, harpsichord, clavichord, organ, spinet or even the early pianofortes, although around the middle of 18th century it often implied the harpsichord.¹³ Out of these instruments the ones that seem more fitting are the harpsichord and the clavichord. Between the two, the harpsichord has bigger volume and a broader range, while the clavichord has a more intimate and warm sound, is capable of producing different dynamics and is the only keyboard instrument to have a vibrato effect. As many as the arguments in favor of any keyboard instrument as Kirkpatrick points out, playing the Well-tempered *Clavier* in different instrument can each time bring out different qualities.¹⁴

Another element of the title that we should take into consideration is the pedagogic character that Bach adds to this composition. The purpose of the WTC is not only to expand the repertoire of a specific instrument, but for young people to improve their musical abilities and for the already skilled to be delighted, as the title suggests. This perception of the purifying role of music is strongly connected to Bach's Lutheran tradition, and under this light the choice of instrument is ultimately of minor importance.¹⁵

¹³ Ledbetter, *Bach's Well-tempered clavier: the 48 preludes and fugues*, 14.

¹⁴ Ralph Kirkpatrick, *Interpreting Bach's Well-tempered Clavier: A Performer's Discourse of Method* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1984), 11.

¹⁵ Ledbetter, *Bach's Well-tempered clavier: the 48 preludes and fugues*, 34.

Prelude and Fugue in F minor, Book II, BWV 881

According to K. Wolff, as a general observation, in the preludes the harmony is the leading force, while in fugues it's the melody.¹⁶ That generalization seems to apply in this set of prelude and fugue. The *prelude* is in sonata form. The exposition takes place in the first 28 measures, the development is from m. 29 to 56 and from m.57 until the end there is an abbreviated recapitulation. By counting the measures of each section we realize that the relationship between them is 2:2:1.¹⁷ The opening theme consists of sighing appoggiaturas in a four bar phrase that ends on a half cadence. Although not on the text, it is a common practice to slur those appoggiaturas.

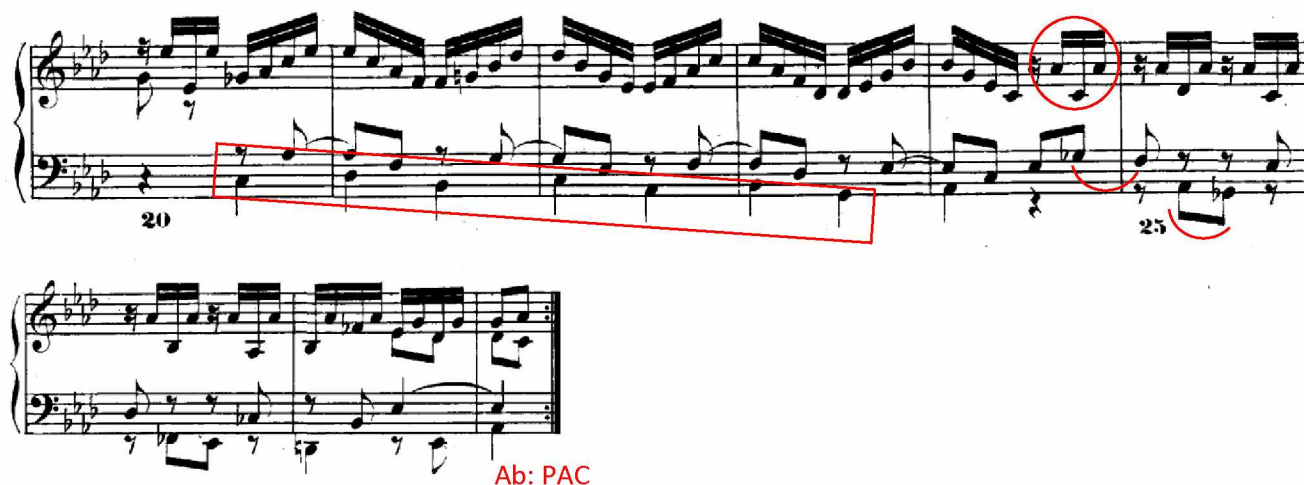


Ex. 3 *Prelude and Fugue in F minor, WYC II, Prelude mm. 1-4*, the sighing appoggiaturas (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1866)

The next four bar phrase presents a contrasting idea, less lyrical that introduces a disconnected 16th notes pattern. Those two ideas alternate one another while modulating to the key of Ab major until m. 20 where a closing theme combines all the elements of the opening themes: walking quarter notes in the bass mm. 21-24; the 16th notes pattern after m. 24; and the falling appoggiaturas of the beginning on the bass and tenor after m. 24, as seen in Example 4. The exposition ends in a perfect authentic cadence in the relative key, Ab.

¹⁶ Wolff, *Masters of the keyboard*, 22.

¹⁷ Keller, *The Well-tempered Clavier by Johann Sebastian Bach*, 165.



Ex. 4 *Prelude*, mm. 20-28, the closing theme

The development starts with the opening theme in the key of Ab and the second theme, with the disconnected 16ths now on the left hand, gently moves to Eb minor. After that, Bach explores further elements of the exposition while modulating to the keys of Bb minor and Db major. The recapitulation in m. 57 leads to an emotionally tense deceptive cadence in m. 60. The last 8 measures correspond to the last 8 of the exposition but in the key of F minor.

The *fugue* is for three voices and has a tonal answer. The subject consists of two parts. The first, in the first two measures, features a jump and three repeated eighth notes and the second, in the next two measures, consists of a run of sixteenth notes (Example 5).



Ex. 5 *Prelude and Fugue in F minor*, WYC II, *Fugue*, mm. 1-4

Throughout the fugue Bach modulates from F minor to Ab major, C minor with a prominent cadence -the only one in the fugue apart from the ending-, and Bb minor. The episodes combine motivic material from the subject, the repeated eighth notes and the sixteenth notes runs. The second half of the fugue, after the section-ending cadence in m. 40, has a more serious and dramatic mood. Contrary to the norm, the fugue does not end on a Picardy third. The only note at the last measure are three octave tonic pitches.

Chapter 2 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Background

One of the most famous composers in Western classical music, and one of the most influential is Ludwig van Beethoven. Born in Bonn in 1770, his life was that of a continuous struggle. Gifted with an immense musical talent and extraordinary amounts of energy, he had to struggle with the loss of his mother, an abusive father, lack of a partner and of course the terrifying loss of his hearing -that happened gradually over the course of his adult life. Driven by his passion for his art he continued to struggle against his misfortunes and managed to hold a successful music career –although with many ups and downs- and enjoyed significant fame and recognition even during his life time. He died in Vienna in 1827.

Compositional Style

Beethoven's compositional life is traditionally divided into three periods. Although more periods have been suggested the original ternary seems to be rather strong, especially because "the breaks between the periods correspond with the major turning-points in Beethoven's biography."¹⁸ The "early" or "formative" period spans roughly until 1802, the year of the *Heiligenstadt Testament*. In this period he masters and sometimes defies classical forms¹⁹ and his compositions are very virtuosic and full of energy. The second period, the "heroic", is when Beethoven fully develops his dramatic massive style with sudden dynamic changes and plethora of accents. It coincides with the events following the devastating letter of Heiligenstadt and

¹⁸ Joseph Kerman, et al., "Beethoven, Ludwig van," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, (Oxford University Press), accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40026pg11>.

¹⁹ Piano sonata Op. 2 has four movements, instead of the traditional three

with the pick of his struggle to overcome the obstacles of his disease. Although his third and fifth symphonies are the ones usually seen as the exemplification of the style of this middle period, lyrical and calmer compositions also come from that period, like the fourth Piano Concerto or the Violin Concerto. The last, “late” period is considered to be after 1814, and corresponds with the almost complete loss of his hearing, the ending of the “Immortal Beloved” affair, the long and exhausting legal battle with his sister in-law and the disappointment with the political system. Despite those personal disasters in this period his compositions are more “philosophical” with much attention paid to the “personal subjectivity, rather than the more objective character of the heroic music.”²⁰ The late sonatas, late quartets and ninth symphony belong to this period of “formal and stylistic innovation”.²¹

No matter the year of a composition, there are certain features apparent throughout his compositional output. K. Wolff observes that very often there are two contrasting principles in Beethoven’s compositions.²² They are antithetic in terms of function and direction, one descending and one ascending. Another feature in Beethoven is the juxtaposition of contrasting elements in his music to symbolize contrasting ideas. Opposing registers, especially when exploring the edges of the range (Example 6), symbolize opposing ethics; polyphonic texture symbolizes struggle and anxiety while homophonic peace and calmness (Example 7); intense dissonances symbolize hopeless conflict; scale motives in comparison to arpeggio motives symbolize close and open structures respectively, as they are found in the first and third

²⁰ Glenn Stanley, “Some thoughts on biography and a chronology of Beethoven’s life and music”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*, ed. Glenn Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4-5.

²¹ Stanley, “Some thoughts”, 4.

²² Konrad Wolff, “Beethoven,” in *Masters of the keyboard: individual style elements in the piano music of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1983), 115-28.

movement of the violin concerto respectively, and of course major or minor modes represent positive or negative feelings (Examples 8a and b).



Ex. 6 *Piano Sonata Op. 111 mm. 48-9* (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1967)



Ex. 7 *Piano Sonata Op. 101, 4th movement. mm. 82-90*. A moment of calmness in between the tense polyphonic texture of the measures before and the four voice fugue that is to come. (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, ca.1920)



Ex. 8a, *Piano Sonata Op. 57 "Appassionata", 1st movement, mm. 1-2*. The main theme in f minor (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, ca.1920)



Ex. 8b, *Piano Sonata Op. 57 "Appassionata", 1st movement, mm. 35-37*. The second theme in Ab major.

Piano Sonatas

If Bach's 48 preludes and fugues were to be described as the *Old Testament* of keyboard music, then the *New Testament* would be Beethoven's 32 Piano Sonatas. Written over the course of his life they are a good representation of his stylistic development and they embody much of his musical essence. Their importance and artistic value is far too big, such that an attempt to present an inclusive description of their characteristics would by far surpass the purposes of this project. Still, a few points could be brought up.

Taking into consideration Beethoven's immense virtuoso skills, and therefore his in depth knowledge of the keyboard, it is only natural that his "piano music remained a vehicle for his most advanced ideas when many of his most profound and original works were conceived".²³ Double notes runs, complicated figurations, broken chords in rapid sixteenth notes, octaves, utilization of the whole range of the keyboard, trills in addition to a melody on the same hand were but a few of the challenges presented in his piano works. Therefore the technical abilities demanded in his sonatas by far exceeded those of the average Viennese amateur, but still they were very popular even during his time.²⁴ Also very interesting is Beethoven's experimentations with the pedal, that is maybe for the first time used to create ambiance rather than to connect the notes.²⁵

²³ William Kinderman, "Beethoven" in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music*, ed. by Larry Todd (New York: Routledge, 2004), 55.

²⁴ Czerny once informed Beethoven that there is a lady in Vienna who has been practicing Op. 22 for a month and is still unable to play the beginning. Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*, 6.

²⁵ See Piano Sonata Op. 27 No. 2, 1st movement, and Op. 31 No. 2 1st movement mm. 152-157

Through his sonatas he also explored the use of different forms. It is very interesting that “no two sonatas are identical in character”.²⁶ The same thing can be easily seen in his symphonies. Indeed in Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas the number of movements can be two, three or four; some begin with a slow first movement and others end with a slow one; some include fugues; some have themes and variations; some include an introduction; some last less than 10 minutes, while Op. 106 -the *Hammerklavier*- is almost 45 minutes long; and Op. 26 does not have a movement in sonata form. Going over them we realize the extent to which Beethoven would go to ensure the individuality of his compositions.²⁷

Piano Sonata Op. 109, No. 30

Among the most important compositions of Beethoven’s late period are the *Diabelli Variations* Op. 120, *Missa Solemnis* Op. 123, the Symphony No. 9, Op. 125, the late string quartets, as well as his late Piano Sonatas, Opp. 101, 106 and 109-11.

Piano Sonata Op. 109 in E major was composed in 1820. It is dedicated to Maximiliane Brentano (1802-1861), the daughter of Antonie Brentano (1780-1869), a candidate for the “Immortal Beloved” title. The first movement *Vivace ma non troppo* is an extremely condensed sonata form. The primary theme is a simple melody in quarter notes accompanied by sixteenth notes, distributed between the two hands (Example 9).

²⁶ Robert Taub, *Playing the Beethoven Piano Sonatas* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 2002), 16.

²⁷ Wolff, *Masters*, 111.



Ex. 9 *Piano Sonata Op. 109*, 1st movement, mm. 1-4 (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1967)

The bass, on the off-beats and discontinued, outlines a descending line from E to E, and it's going to be an important structural element for the whole sonata. According to Andras Schiff, this movement “does not begin. It continues. It comes from somewhere”.²⁸ It only takes 8 measures for the primary theme area to be concluded, at which point the secondary theme area starts. The second theme continues in B major with a different tempo, *Adagio espressivo* and a different aesthetic. The development starts in m. 16 and is based on the primary theme. It features modulations, dominant pedals and a gradual crescendo as the right hand reaches for the higher registers of the keyboard. In the recapitulation that starts in m. 48 the descending bass line is better understood since this time its pattern is consistent throughout (Example 10).



Ex. 10 *Piano Sonata Op. 109*, 1st movement, mm. 48-52

²⁸ Andras Schiff, “Beethoven Lecture-Recitals” (lecture recitals, Wigmore Hall, London, UK, 2004-6), <https://wigmore-hall.org.uk/podcasts/andras-schiff-beethoven-lecture-recitals>

The secondary theme area continues in E major and starts in m. 58. The Coda, which starts in m. 66, is based on the primary theme. It also employs a phrase in choral texture, mm. 78-85. Beethoven marked a pedal starting on the last E major chord of the movement that is to be released with the first note of the second movement. Also, according to the manuscript, there is no double-bar to separate the first from the second movement. It is therefore obvious that Beethoven wanted the two movements to merge into one another.²⁹

The second movement is another condensed sonata form, this time on a fast tempo *Prestissimo*, and in e minor. The primary theme I, mm. 1-8, is written in double counterpoint at the octave. It features the same bass line as the first movement, a descending step-wise motion from e to e, only in the minor mode. Mm. 9-16 are the primary theme II. The secondary theme, mm. 33-42, is in B minor and share similarities with primary theme II (Examples 11a and b).



Ex. 11a *Piano Sonata Op. 109*, 2nd movement, mm. 9-12



Ex. 11b *Piano Sonata Op. 109*, 2nd movement, mm. 33-36

²⁹ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Complete Piano Sonatas: Volume II*, ed. Schnabel (Milano: Curci, 1977) 375, footnote c.

Secondary theme area ends with a closing theme, mm. 57-66. The Development features a fugato based on the bass of the primary theme I on the right hand, mm. 70-83, and a phrase of choral texture based on the same bass line, mm. 89-104. The recapitulation starts on m. 105. Once the Primary theme has been played, the hands exchange lines in mm. 112-120. From then until the end the tonality remains in e minor.

The third movement, *Gesangvoll mit innigster Empfindung*, is a Theme and Variations. The theme is a tonally open symmetrical binary form in E major. The bass line resembles that of the previous movements in the starting note and the step-wise motion, but in this case it is ascending (Example 12).



Ex. 12 *Piano Sonata Op. 109*, 3rd movement, mm. 1-4

Variation I is a melodic elaboration of the theme with waltz-like accompaniment. The texture of Variation II resembles that of the opening of the first movement. The reprise in this variation is written out and has a different -continuous- texture.³⁰ The syncopated texture returns in m. 45 but with a chord in every sixteenth note. Variation III has a two-part invention texture. The theme is on the bass, elaborated with sixteenth note, while the soprano presents the bass line of the theme. Variation IV is a four-part invention. The texture resembles that of a string quartet. Variation V is a fugato that strongly resembles the Credo of the *Missa Solemnis*. In the

³⁰ That is a strong indication that the performer should take all the repetitions.

last Variation the dominant note B is repeated throughout. It starts as quarter notes and it accelerates to eighth, to triplet eighths, to a measured trill of sextuplet sixteenths, of thirty-seconds notes, that finally leads to a free trill. As the notes become gradually faster, so do the dynamic become more intense, until the arrival of a brilliant forte in m. 169. Part B of the theme is more freely elaborated with arpeggiated figures on the same harmonies, mm. 169-176, on top of a low trill on a B. On the written out reprise of B, the left hand features an energetic run of thirty-seconds notes while the right hand takes the B trill. The melody is presented in syncopated form above the trill, mm. 177-183 (Example 13).



Ex. 13 *Piano Sonata Op. 109*, 3rd movement, mm. 177-9

That texture, a melody accompanied with a trill on the same hand, was a common tendency of Beethoven.³¹ The movement, like Bach's Goldberg Variations, ends with a quiet repetition of the main in theme, this time with no reprise and marked cantabile instead of dolce. According to Andras Schiff, this sonata has no real beginning and no real ending, and the best response after it would be silence, instead of applause.³²

³¹ See the ending of Piano Sonata Op. 53, No. 21, after m. 485.

³² Schiff, "Beethoven Lecture-Recitals" (Wigmore Hall)

Chapter 3 Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

"My enthusiasm and admirations for his marvelous poetical talents had invariably, with each meeting, increased till I almost began to look upon him as 'a God amongst musicians'."

-Franz Liszt (1811-1886) about Chopin³³

Background

The romantic composer and pianist, Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin was born on March 1, 1810 in Żelazowa Wola, a village near Warsaw, Poland. His father, Mikołaj Chopin (1771-1844), a Frenchman and teacher of French in Poland, was part of the intellectual circle in Warsaw and he and his wife Justyna *née* Krzyżanowska (1782-1861) secured a well education for their children and raised them in a society of academics and wealthy aristocrats, where engagement with the arts was supported. Although Chopin received formal training in composition during his high school years, he was essentially self-taught as a pianist.

The Polish-Russian War of 1830-1831 found him in Vienna, where a journey around Europe had just begun. That war had a great impact on his life; he was destined to never return to his homeland. Even though by then it was clear that Poland wouldn't be able to nourish his artistic growth, it was never Chopin's intention to leave permanently.³⁴ As a result a feeling of nostalgia was to be added to his already emotional and melancholic nature. However it also led him to

³³ Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, trans. by Naomi Shohet, ed. Roy Howat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 273.

³⁴ Kornel Michałowski and Jim Samson. "Chopin, Fryderyk Franciszek." Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51099>.

Paris, where he was to become part of the artistic circles of the cultural capital of Europe at the time, and to gain a prodigious reputation as a pianist, composer and teacher. His companies included Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Hector Berlioz (1803-1869), Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863), and Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), to name a few.

It was in those artistic circles that another life-determining incident in Chopin's life occurred: his encounter with the novelist George Sand (pseudonym for: Amantine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin 1804-1876). Although she made an ill first impression, the two of them became a couple the summer of 1838. During their relationship, that lasted 9 years, Chopin was rather productive and composed some of his most famous works, like his 24 preludes Op. 28, Ballades Nos. 2-4 (Op. 38, Op. 47, Op. 52), Sonata No. 3 Op. 58, Scherzi No. 3 and 4 (Op. 39 and 54).

His reputation as a pianist was renowned, and he was well received by both the audience and his peers. Yet, he gave very few public concerts and preferred to play in the more intimate setting of a salon amongst few friends. That choice might be explained by his aristocratic nature, his emotional make up that was not suited for the intense life of a concert pianist, his tender piano style that was better appreciated in a smaller salon rather than in a big concert hall and lastly his frail health.³⁵ He died in Paris on 17th of October 1849 of tuberculosis, a sickness he was struggling with since 1836.

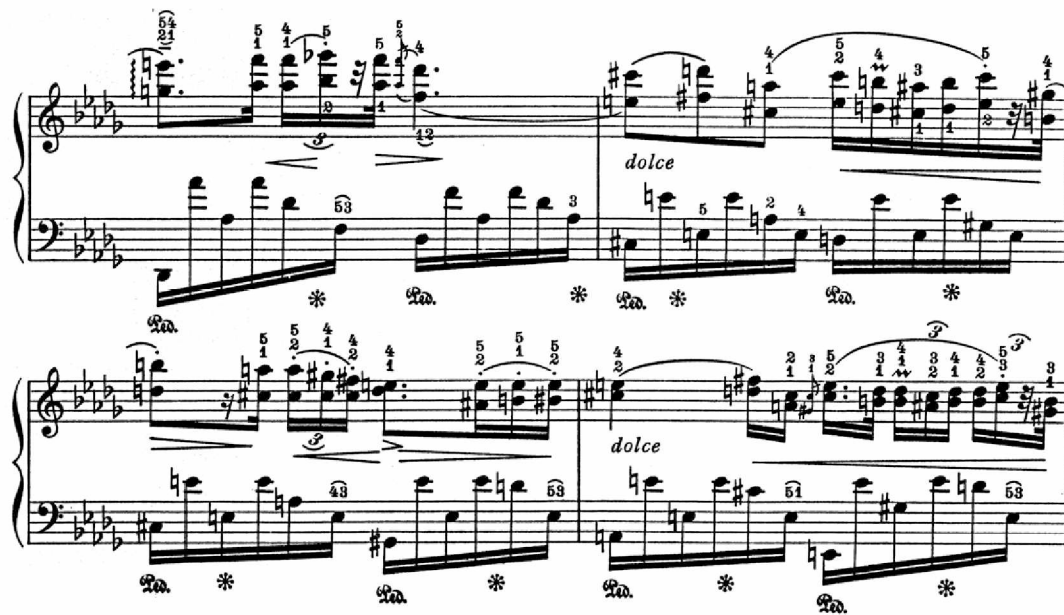
Compositional Style

Chopin composed almost exclusively for the piano. His compositions include dance-inspired pieces, such as mazurkas, polonaises and waltzes; nocturnes; miniatures, such as preludes and

³⁵ William G. Atwood, *Fryderyk Chopin: Pianist from Warsaw* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), preface ix-x.

etudes; the extended-forms, such as ballades, scherzi and fantasies; sonatas and some compositions for piano and orchestra.

One of the most prominent influences in Chopin's music was the *bel canto* tradition of the Italian opera. In his compositions, he employs a *cantabile* style with lyrical melodies that are often very long, with many embellishments, and seem almost improvisatory. Those free, asymmetrical melodies usually have a steady accompaniment which creates the *rubato* feeling that is very prominent in Chopin's compositions. He also liked to "color" his melodies with parallel 3rds or 6ths, a trend very common in operatic duets (Example 14).



Ex. 14 Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2, mm. 33-36 (London: Augener, 1935)

His two layers textures of long expressive melodic lines with rich arpeggiated or chordal accompaniment is another direct reference to Italian operatic composers, like Belini (1801-

1835).³⁶ This style is prominent in his nocturnes as seen in Example 14. The ability of the performer to bring out these melodies and to create a singing tone from the piano was of the outmost importance for Chopin and something that he regularly demanded of his students:

The best way to attain naturalness in performance, in Chopin's view, was to listen frequently to Italian singers, among whom there were some very remarkable artists in Paris at the time. He always held up as an example to pianists their broad and simple style, the ease with which they used their voices and the remarkable sustaining powers which this ease gave them.³⁷

-Maurycy Karasowski

J. S. Bach was one of Chopin's favorite composers. On his 1838-1839 trip to Majorca with George Sand the only score that he took with him was his beloved Well-Tempered Clavier. Chopin's influence from Bach is evident from his contrapuntal writing. He would always make sure to accompany his beautiful melodies with equally beautiful bass lines, or less evident counter melodies (Example 15).



Ex. 15 *Piano Concerto No. 2 Op 21, 1st movement, mm. 222-5, Piano Solo part* (New York: Schirmer, 1918)

³⁶ Carol Montparker, *The composer's landscape* (Milwaukee: Amadeus Press, 2014), 139

³⁷ Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, trans. by Naomi Shohet, ed Roy Howat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 44.

Another big source of inspiration was his motherland, Poland. Using Polish folk tunes as a starting point, he compounded them with more sophisticated and complicated harmonies. A result of that combination can be found in the Mazurkas and the Polonaise. Also inspired by the folk music of Poland was Chopin's tendency to emphasize the second beat, instead of the first, in triple time pieces. It is especially so in the mazurkas (Example 16).



Ex. 16 *Mazurka Op. 24, No. 1*, mm. 14-20 (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1879)

Even without all the references that we have about Chopin's abilities as a pianist, it is clear from his piano writing that he was a gifted virtuoso with deep understanding of the instrument. He was a big advocate of natural playing, where the longer fingers –second, third and fourth, rest on the black keys, while the shorter ones –thumb and fifth, on the white keys next to them. He usually advised his students to start with the scales of B, F# and D \flat .³⁸ His virtuoso writing consists of runs, arpeggios, double notes melodies or runs, and chords to name a few. But no matter how intimidating a passage might seem, Chopin's piano writing, although highly virtuosic, is suitable for the piano since it starts from there. As Michałowski and Samson put it, "Chopin derived his piano writing from the instrument itself and from the physical properties of

³⁸ Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, trans. by Naomi Shohet, ed Roy Howat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), introduction 17.

the two hands”.³⁹ Another common feature of his piano writing is the frequent use of the rhythm two against three, or unusual rhythmic combinations, with a long run of rapid notes against a steady, slower moving accompaniment (Example 17).



Ex. 17 *Nocturne Op. 9*, mm. 3-4 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, ca.1905)

Bigger forms

Chopin's compositional style up until 1830 reflected a virtuosic "brilliant style", characteristic of the post-classical concert hall music. Works of this period include his early brilliant polonaise, some variation sets and independent rondos and the two piano concertos. But after 1830, the year that he left Poland permanently, there is an apparent change in his musical style. As Samson points out, "Chopin gradually developed a long range harmonic vision which enabled him to gain structural control over the materials of the brilliant style."⁴⁰ Chopin's mature extended forms include the ballades, the fantasies and the scherzi.

Scherzo literally means a jest or a joke. Beethoven used it as an alternative to the minuet and established it as a movement form in a multi-movement work. So in Classical-era compositions

³⁹ Michałowski, Kornel and Jim Samson. "Chopin, Fryderyk Franciszek." Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press

⁴⁰ Jim Samson, "Extended forms: the ballades, scherzos and fantasies," in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 102.

it would usually be the second or third movement of a symphony or sonata, in triple meter, with a spirited character and usually with a contrasting section, called *trio*.⁴¹

Chopin also used the scherzo form as 2nd movement in his mature sonatas, but he also composed four independent pieces under the same title. Like its predecessor Chopin's scherzi are in triple meter, in ternary form, with a contrasting character trio, with contrasting articulations and many *sforzando* markings –much like Beethoven's scherzi. But a very prominent difference between scherzos of multi-movement works and Chopin's independent scherzos lies in the importance of the aspect of contrast. Right from the opening themes of all Chopin scherzos we can see the juxtaposition of materials with contrasting dynamics, texture and register.⁴² Another difference in Chopin scherzos is that there is not much left from the energetic joke like character, but rather a dark melancholic feeling –especially in the three first scherzos.

Scherzo No. 3, Op. 39

The Scherzo Op. 39 in C# minor is in ternary form. The opening is tonally ambiguous, and highly chromatic. According to Edward Cone, F# minor might be implied, and the c# heard at the beginning of the scherzo theme in m. 25 could have been a dominant to the key of F# minor.⁴³

It is clear that this is not the case only on beat three of m.27 where we have E \flat -instead of E#

⁴¹ Tilden A. Russell and Hugh Macdonald. "Scherzo." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed March 30, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/24827>.

⁴² Samson, "Extended forms," 103-106.

⁴³ The first two measures could be seen as first inversions of D major and C# major, VI⁶ and V⁶ of F# minor. The big B major of m. 8 becomes B# in m. 17 which could tonicize the assumed C# major, dominant to F#. Edward T. Cone, "Ambiguity and reinterpretation in Chopin," in *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 143.

that would have been the leading tone of F# minor- and the music clearly outlines the key of C# minor. The larger form of the piece is A(scherzo)B(trio)A'(scherzo)B'(not as trio).⁴⁴

Section A (mm. 25-154) is in ternary form itself, with a (mm.25-56), contrasting b (57-105) and a' (106-154). The main theme consists of octaves in both hands played *forte* in a descending line, with the loudest octave being the lower and final one (Example 18). Part b of A is contrasting in dynamics and texture, although the uneasy character remains. It starts *piano* with *staccato* left hand and a sustained lyrical melody on the right hand. Gradually it builds to a *fortissimo* and the main theme is heard once more -a'. Mm. 131-154 of a'-which is what distinguish a from a'- serve as a link to section B.



Ex. 18 *Scherzo No. 3*. The main theme (New York: G. Shirmer, 1915)

The next section, B (mm. 155-366), is the trio part of the scherzo and it is in ccdc' form. It is written in Db major, which is the parallel major of c# minor, but with an enharmonic spelling. Part c of B (mm. 155-199) consists of a lyrical chorale in the lower piano register, marked

⁴⁴ John Rink, "Authentic Chopin: history, analysis and intuition in performance." In *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. by John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 219.

sostenuto, followed by a descending arpeggio-like figuration that outlines the last chord of the chorale phrase, and is marked *leggierissimo* (Example 19).



Ex 19 Scherzo No. 3, mm. 172-8

Part c is repeated essentially unchanged (mm. 200-242), only that the chorale is transposed one octave higher. Part d of B that follows (mm. 243-286) has four ascending arpeggiated figuration. The last one starts descending while outlining parallel dominant seventh chords (mm. 271-6). After that, part c' is repeated one more time (mm. 287-366) but with some different harmonies (mm. 296-7 and 312-19) and different ending that eventually leads to the return of section A'. What is very interesting in this link between sections B and A' is that Chopin manages to integrate the octaves of the main theme with the dotted half notes choral texture of part c (mm. 352-359) as seen in Example 20.



Ex 20 mm. 352-9

The scherzo section (A') comes back once again (mm. 367-447). In m. 374 though, instead of two octaves he wrote an additional note, making this phrase significantly more difficult than the previous ones. We could assume that he did that either to make sure that the tempo is not to be rushed unnecessarily, or because at that moment he wanted to express something particularly hard thus making this passage harder (Example 21).



Ex. 21 mm. 367-76. The marked chord makes the passage more difficult, compared to the other times, which implies a small *ritardando* in the tempo.

Part a of A' is repeated exactly the same, but there is a modulation in part b' to the key of the median –E major. Even though harmonically the modulation is smooth, since it is a common tone modulation, the A major chord of m. 433, the pivot chord, is unexpected. Both sections A' and B' that is to come are formally open, as there is no repeat of the respective a and c part. Those sections are goal-directed instead.

Similarly, unexpected is the return of section B' (mm 448-572), this time in E major. According to Rink, "it is at this point that the piece diverges from standard formal models" since section B' is not a trio.⁴⁵ Part c of B' is the same as the first time, only in a different key. In m. 494 -part c''- the music shifts to the parallel key, e minor. This shift, according to the writer's view, marks one of the most melancholic and esoteric moments in this piece, and maybe in Chopin's

⁴⁵ John Rink, *Chopin Studies 2*, 220

compositional work in general. In m. 541 there seems to be a glimpse of hope, as the choral theme is heard one more time in C# major, this time with a different texture. There is no descending figuration and the chorale theme is accompanied by arpeggios on top of a dominant pedal. As the melody ascends, the dynamic grows and the tempo becomes faster, leading to the explosive finale Tempo I *con fuoco* (mm. 573-636) back to the global tonic. Despite the tragic mood of the finale the mode shifts to the parallel major in the Coda (mm. 637-649) and the piece ends with two *fortississimo* C# major chords followed by the three lower C#s of the keyboard.

This Scherzo by Chopin is a powerful piece with a very dramatic mood, that requires a lot of energy from the performer. Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982) mentioned that this scherzo “takes the most strength out of me than any other work I know”.⁴⁶ What adds more in the intense character of this scherzo, as well as at the other scherzos of Chopin and his Ballades to name a few, is that they are end-directed pieces. The piece keeps growing until the end and reaches its climax in the last section.

⁴⁶ Arthur Rubinstein, *Video Documentary*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=defpNc1TQNI>

Chapter 4 Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Background

Sergey Sergeyevich Prokofiev was born on April 11, 1891 in Sontsovka (now a Ukrainian village but then a part of the Russian Empire) as the only son of an affluent family. His earlier musical experiences included listening to the piano playing of his mother, who also became his first piano teacher as early as the age of three. His first original melodies would also come from that time, when he would play along with his mother, improvising in the higher register of the piano while she was practicing middle range etudes.⁴⁷ Because of the musical talents that he showed at such a young age and the cultural isolated environment of Sontsovka, his parents sought professional guidance. They hired Reinhold Glière (1875-1956), a student of the celebrated musician Sergei Taneyev (1856-1915) to spend two summers with the Prokofievs in order to teach their 9 year-old Sergei piano and composition.

He entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory In 1904, where his principal teachers were Anatoly Lyadov (1855-1914) (harmony, counterpoint, and composition), Nikolay Tcherepnin (1873-1945) (conducting) and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908) (orchestration). He graduated from the Conservatory in composition in 1909 and in piano performance in 1914, winning the first prize by playing his first piano concerto. The training provided much for Prokofiev, but the environment of the conservatory was rather conservative for the young musician's experimental output. Starting in 1908, he found the opportunity to express his daring musical language and to gain exposure to contemporary music written in Russia and abroad at the

⁴⁷ David Nice, *Prokofiev: from Russia to the West 1891-1935*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2003), 8.

“Evenings of Contemporary Music”. These evenings, organized by Alfred Nurok and Walter Nouvel, helped Prokofiev gain a reputation as a gifted pianist and composer and encouraged him to pursue the development of his personal harmonic language.

Since 1913 Prokofiev had been travelling across Europe for educational purposes, concerts, and to promote his career as a composer. In 1918, after the February Revolution, he left Russia for a tour in the United States, but ended up staying abroad until 1936 when he permanently returned to his homeland. Through his years abroad, living first in the United States and after 1923 settling in Paris, he found himself in the world’s center of new music. In those years, Prokofiev struggled for recognition. In the United States Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) was hailed as the great Russian pianist and Europe was dominated by Igor Stravinsky’s (1882-1971) music. Nevertheless, in his years abroad Prokofiev managed to gain some reputation. His preference for large-scale symphonic and stage works also became clear during that period. The operas *“The Love for Three Oranges”* and *“Fiery Angel”*, second, third, and fourth symphonies, piano concertos 3, 4 and 5 and the ballets *“Le pas d’acier”*, *“The Prodigal Son”* and *“Romeo et Juliet”* were written during this time period.

In 1936, Prokofiev decided to return to Russia. The reasons for this decision remain unclear. It might have been in hopes of financial prosperity, since his works had always been popular in Russia. Or perhaps it was due to nostalgia combined with an inability to fully comprehend the political situation in the Soviet Union and a naive assumption that he could maintain his travelling rights. It is also unclear whether the notable change in his compositional style was in compliance to the commands of Socialist Realism or a natural result of artistic evolution and development. The fact is that during his last years Prokofiev’s music became more melodious,

less dissonant and angular.⁴⁸ After his return to the Soviet Union, Prokofiev became also active in the field of film music. His collaboration with the director Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948) resulted in the music for the films *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible*. Also it was during the Second World War that he composed the famous “War Sonatas” (piano sonatas 6-8), arguably his greatest contribution to the piano sonata genre. In 1948, along with almost every important Soviet composer he was accused of formalism by Andrey Zhdanov (1896-1948) and many of his works were banned.⁴⁹ This proved to be a heavy blow for the already sick Prokofiev, for he never managed to overcome the accusations and recover his authentic vigorous style. He also missed the opportunity to experience the change in the artistic climate that followed the death of Josef Stalin (1878-1953), since, ironically, they died on the same day, March 5, 1953.

Compositional style

Although Prokofiev’s compositional style underwent many changes throughout his career, there are certain traits that consistently followed him. In his autobiography he outlined them in the following basic lines:⁵⁰

- The classical line, which often takes a neo-classical
 - The modern trend, with his personal harmonic language and new departures in melody, orchestration and drama

⁴⁸ Boris Berman, *Prokofiev’s Piano Sonatas: A guide for the listener and the performer* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2008), 10.

⁴⁹ the leading cultural ideologue of the Stalinist period

⁵⁰ S.I.Shlifshtein ed., *S. Prokofiev: Autobiography Articles, Reminiscences*, trans. Rose Prokofieva (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House), 36-37.

- The *toccata* or “motor” line, found in repetitive melodic figures
 - The lyrical line, endowed with the gift to create easily memorable melodies, he perceived melody as the most important element of music
 - The scherzo-ish line, meaning music that contains the meaning of whimsicality, laughter and mockery⁵¹

Later in his life he adopted another trait, a more “patriotic” or “Russian” style.⁵² This facet can be seen in the bold and vigorous segments of his “War Sonatas” for piano or in the opera *War and Peace*. It is also reflected in the use of sonorities that imitate the sound of bells · a device linked to the Orthodox tradition and commonly used by Russian composers in moments of high emotional tension. Another Russian trace is a general affinity for fairy tales, something that inspired many Russian composers to set them to music. Prokofiev incorporates that tradition in his music by using the two far ends of the keyboard or by maintaining the same texture or perpetual rhythmic pattern in order to create a spell like feeling as well as a frightening or mysterious mood. Another characteristic of Prokofiev’s style is his habit to transpose part of a musical phrase a half step up or down from what it was expected to be.⁵³ Nevertheless, in Prokofiev’s music there is usually a clear sense of tonality. Despite the use of non-chordal notes and short moments of tonal ambiguity, a clear resolution to the tonic normally follows.

⁵¹ Prokofiev preferred the word “scherzo” instead of “grotesque” which was commonly used to describe his music, much to his displeasure. S.I.Shlifshtein, *S. Prokofiev: Autobiography*, 36-37.

⁵² After the publication of his autobiography.

⁵³ A device described as “Prokofievize” by the composer’s son Oleg. B. Berman, *Prokofiev’s Piano Sonatas*, 16.

The War Sonatas

In the 20th century only a few composers committed to the piano sonata genre and wrote more than a couple of them. Most noted, Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915), who early in the 20th century composed 10 piano sonatas, and Prokofiev who wrote 9. Both of these composers contributed to a reinvigoration of the genre of the piano sonata by applying their personal harmonic language and modern perspective to a rather traditional form.

Prokofiev's piano sonatas 6-8 Opp. 82-84, published in 1940, 1942, and 1944 respectively, are commonly known as the "War Sonatas". He started working on them simultaneously in 1938, before WWII broke out in Russia. Mira Mendelson tells us that his reading of Romain Rolland's book on Beethoven had rekindled his interest in the genre.⁵⁴ The nervous atmosphere surrounding them can be seen as a reflection of the uncertainty and anguish of the prewar and Second World War years. Those three piano sonatas are considered by many as Prokofiev's greatest contribution to the piano repertoire.

Piano Sonata Op. 83, No. 7

In the piano sonata No 7, Prokofiev exhibits some of his best compositional achievements in terms of structure and development. The first movement, *Allegro Inquieto*, is the most war-like movement of the sonata. It is in sonata form and although it contains many moments of tonal ambiguity it generally revolves around B-flat major. There are two important rhythmic

⁵⁴ Francis Maes, *A history of Russian Music: From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar*, Trans. Arnold J. Pomerans and Erica Pomerans (University of California Press, 2002), 330.

patterns apparent throughout the first movement: the “drumbeat” rhythmic pattern in m. 5 (Example 22) and the iambic pattern of weak-strong beats in m. 20 (Example 23) that strongly reminds marching armies.



Ex 22 Mov. 1, mm.5-6, the drumbeat pattern
(Moscow: Muzgiz, 1955)



Ex. 23 mm. 20-21, the iambic pattern

The main melodic materials featured in this movement are the angular and anxious principal theme in mm.1-4 (Example 24), a fanfare-like motive of descending triads in m. 24 (Example 25) and a dense almost threatening chromatically ascending line first found in the bass line of m. 45 (Example 26) An interesting combination of the descending chromatic line, the fanfare like triads and an inversion of the drumbeat rhythmic pattern can be found in m. 89 (Example 27).



Ex. 24 mm. 1-4, the principal theme



Ex. 25 mm. 24-25, the fanfare-like motive of descending triads, here combined with the iambic rhythmic pattern



Ex. 26 mm. 47-49, the chromatically ascending line in the bass



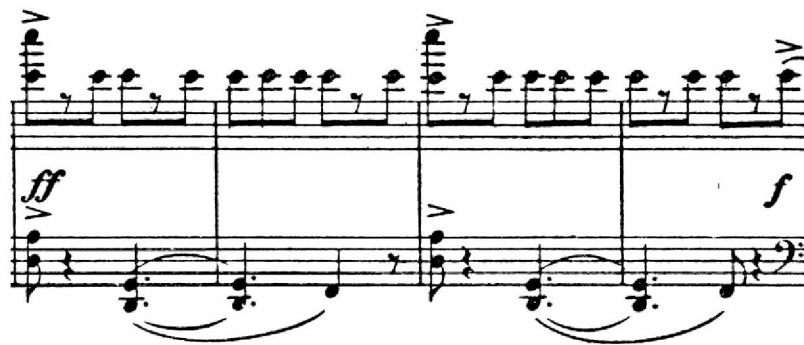
Ex. 27 mm. 89-92, this material will be used in the third movement also

The second theme is presented in m. 124 and it is of a more melodic, lyrical character and in a different tempo, *Andantino* (Example 28). It is a quieter expression of worried feelings about the future.



Ex. 28 mm. 124-126, the second theme

The development begins with the restoration of the main tempo in m. 182. In the development, Prokofiev combines all the materials of the exposition with the addition of large dissonant chords that help to create a dramatic atmosphere resembling a battlefield. Especially the chords in mm. 168-70 and 195-7 resemble the sound of bombs, and the descending thirds in mm. 252-6 as warning sirens. The same triads are used from m. 264 through m. 286 in a softer dynamic and a perpetual motion that resembles the noise of a working machine or a train. The lyrical second theme is combined with that machine like sounds in the bass register in m. 269 and creates a very ominous and anxious mood. In the recapitulation, starting in m. 303 in B minor, Prokofiev changes the order of the materials presented in the exposition.⁵⁵ The second theme is stated again in m. 338 and the initial theme in m. 361. After a series of consecutive crescendi, the drumbeat pattern is hammered in the high register like a frenetic Morse code (Example 29).



Ex. 29 mm. 397-400, the drum beat pattern, now in the high register

The initial theme is stated for the last time in m. 401 and the movement ends in an uncertain doubtful piano but with strong rhythmic elements. The rhythmic pattern of the last two measures sounds like the final beats of a snare drum before an execution.

⁵⁵ A technique also found in Schubert

The second movement, *Andante caloroso*, starts with a completely different character. The main theme is a tender, lyrical melody, that seems to have nothing in common with the angular main theme of the first movement. This movement is in a modified ABA form in the key of E major. That makes the second movement a tritone away from the home key of B flat, an interval that was frequently used by Prokofiev as a tonal relationship between the movements of a piece.⁵⁶ Section A consists of the lyrical main theme placed in the inner voice (Example 30). The first three notes of the main theme create a chromatically-ascending pattern that will be present throughout the whole movement.

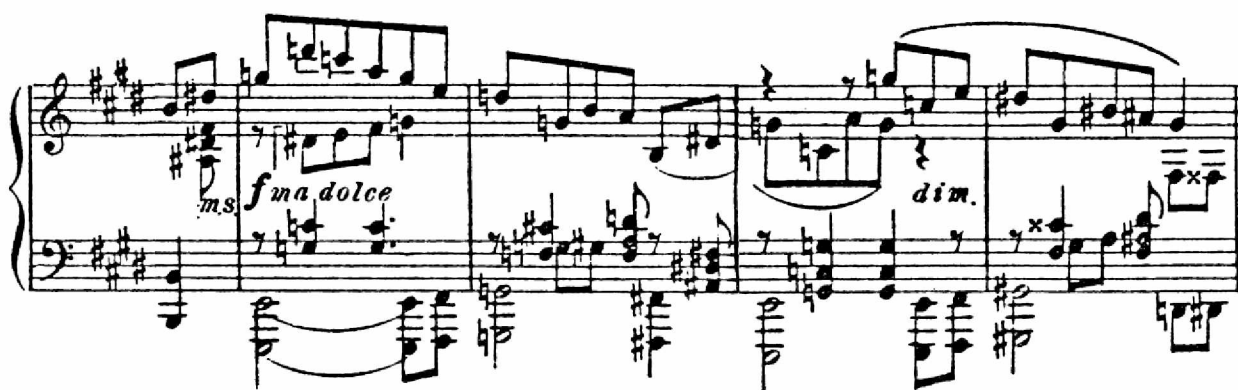


Ex. 30 Second movement, mm. 1-3 the main theme in the alto voice

Measure 32 marks the beginning of section B and brings a shift in the mood. The feeling here is dark and ominous, for the war, even though briefly forgotten, is still going on. The new theme is first stated in a low register in m. 33 and is then restated in m. 39 embellished and in a higher register. The melodic material of measures 46-49 derives from mm. 13-16 of section A (Examples 31a and b).

After a series of persistently ascending chromatic lines in mm. 44 and 50 and scales in mm. 46 and 54, comes an outburst of sonorities in mm. 56 and 62 that imitate the sound of bells

⁵⁶ Just in the piano sonatas we find this tonal relationship in no 2 –first and third movement- no 5 – first and second movement- and no 9 –second movement in mixolydian from D and third movement in A flat major-



Ex. 31a mm. 13-16



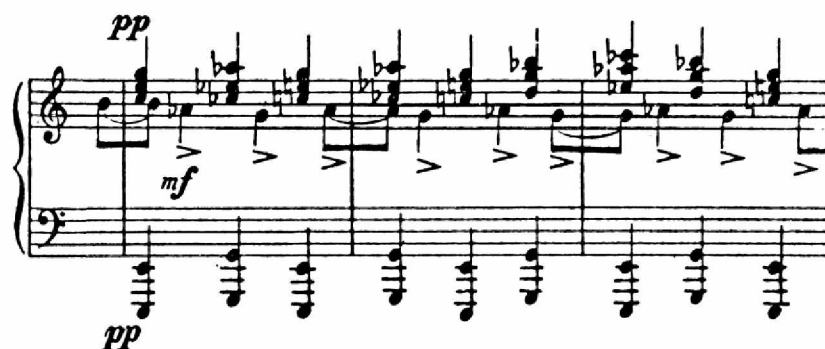
Ex. 31b mm. 46-49, the line of the right hand derives from the melody presented on m. 13

(Example 32). These bells sound as if they are announcing a dreadful disaster. Yet, the structure of that “bells’ theme” resembles much of the initial theme, with a melodic line in an inner voice complemented by syncopated chords. However, the mood, the dynamics, and the register are completely different. It is interesting that here the inner melody is on the offbeat whereas the chords are on the downbeat.



Ex. 32 mm. 56-59, the bell's theme. The inner voice is highlighted.

Bell-like sonorities are also heard in measures 80 and 89 but in a different context. This part stripped of the energy of the previous one, is more like a lament that echoes the catastrophic results of the preceding disaster (Example 33).



Ex. 33 mm. 81-83, lamenting bells

In m. 98 the initial theme returns briefly as a remembrance of the first mood, but the movement is concluded with a series of repeated powerless reflecting chimes.

The Sonata ends with a vivid and dance-like last movement. It is written in 7/8, a rhythm used often in Russian folk songs. In here the rhythm seems to be more important than the melody. Marked *Precipitato*, falls into the category of the toccata line of Prokofiev's compositional style. Its structure is palindromic ABCBA, also known as arch form. Although the time signature is

asymmetrical, the phrases are quite symmetrical and usually two measures long. The whole movement is structured over the motor-like repetition of persistent thick chords on top of a distinctive and rhythmically-articulated bass. The energetic and powerful main theme A (Example 34) evolves continually until m.50 with the exception of mm. 27, 30 and 35 where a two-voice oblique phrase interrupts the main theme. According to Berman this phrase is a “clear reminder of the first movement’s chaos and turmoil” and they “create a strong contrast with the surrounding massive chords”.⁵⁷

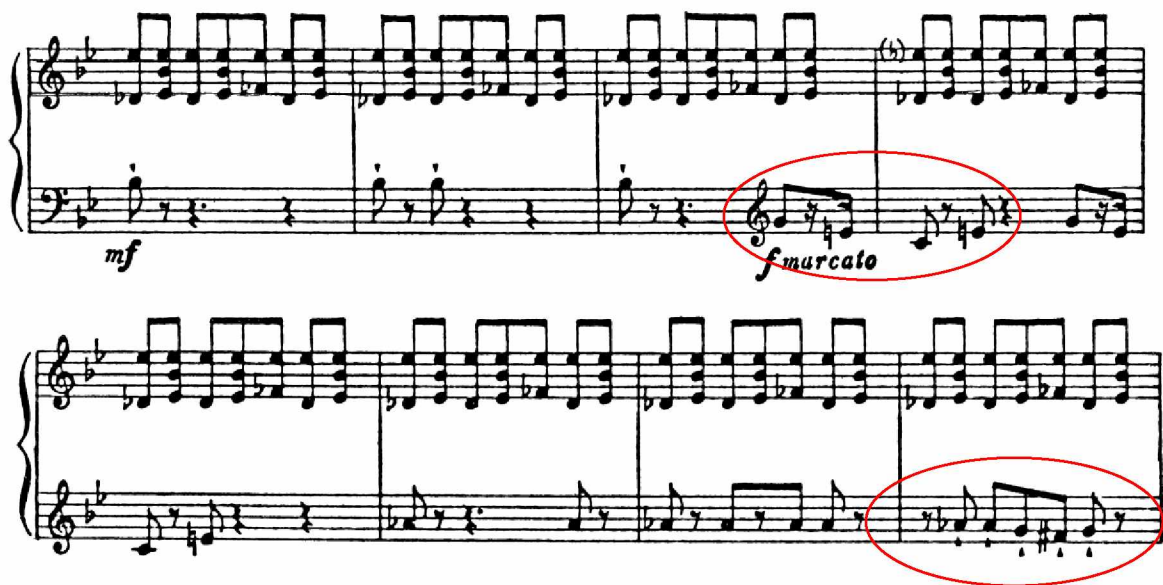


Ex. 34 Third movement, mm. 1-2 the main theme

In m. 50 a different section B begins (Example 35). It shares the rhythmic intensity of the main theme but also resembles the fanfare like motive and chromatic motion found in mm. 92-93 of the first movement.

A drum roll on m. 74 leads to a different more lyrical section on m. 79. This new section C is in E major, which is a tritone away from the home key (Example 36). In m. 82 the chromatic motion and descending thirds motive, apparent in the previous section and in the first movement appears again; only here they are even more compressed.

⁵⁷ Berman, *Prokofiev's Piano Sonatas*, 160.



Ex. 35 mm. 50-57, B section. The fanfare-like motive and chromatic motion are marked.



Ex. 36 mm. 79-81, "C" section

The thematic idea of B reappears in m. 105 and another drum roll in mm. 119-21 (Example 37) marks the return to B flat major and to the A section.



Ex. 37 mm. 119-121, the drumroll in A

The main theme is repeated once again exactly the same as in the beginning but after m. 145 it is embellished with bigger chords and wider use of the piano registers. This powerful movement concludes with a descending B flat major scale and an ascending B flat major arpeggio in “the most rousing of Prokofiev’s endings”.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Berman, *Prokofiev's Piano Sonatas*, 162.

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